STATEMENT BEFORE THE COMMITEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
BY KENNETH ALLARD
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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the honor of being invited to testify before this distinguished committee of the United States Senate. And as a former Congressional Fellow and humble Senate staffer, let me add that it is a particular pleasure to appear on this side of the rostrum.

You have chosen a most appropriate moment to assess the issue of peacekeeping. This is a difficult and emotional topic, where one of the customary pitfalls is the loss of perspective and where partisanship often substitutes for clear thinking. So in suggesting several things about our recent experience with peacekeeping, let me try to keep faith with the lessons learned here as a Congressional Fellow with mentors like Senator John Warner and the late Congressman Bill Nichols. Among other things, they taught me that defense and foreign policies are best addressed by putting the nation's interest ahead of party and position - quaint though that idea often sounds these days.

. That point was brought home to me rather poignantly just hours after arriving in Sarajevo in early 1996 as part of the US peacekeeping contingent for IFOR, the first of our troop commitments to Bosnia under the Dayton Accords. I was standing in a part of that city known as "Sniper Alley" – a street corner where only months before death was one of the few certainties. Something touched my shoulder and I turned to see an old man smiling up at me. He reached out again, touched the American flag combat patch on my right shoulder and simply said, "Thank you." I had never felt prouder to be an American soldier than at that moment. And most of us who saw not only the devastation of that beautiful country but also the hope in the eyes of its children were convinced that our presence there was an appropriate use of American power.

That said, let me be clear about my position on the important question you are examining here this morning. I believe there are three basic flaws in our approach to peacekeeping:

- We have committed ourselves to too many of these operations, especially given the reductions in the size of our forces throughout the last decade.
- We have made these over-commitments worse by attempting to do too much with our limited forces once we have been committed to what are at best difficult and ambiguous missions.
- We have carried out those missions in ways that are rapidly producing not only a crisis of readiness in our forces, but an even more alarming crisis of military leadership.

In looking back across the last decade, most of these flaws could have been foreseen. Indeed one has to be impressed at the naivete with which we approached what almost everyone said at the start was a "new mission." In fact, there is nothing really new about peacekeeping at all. The American army was nothing if not a constabulary force for most of the nineteenth century, keeping the peace of the frontier under the rubric of Manifest Destiny. And as American interests became more global toward the end of that century, the defense of such new responsibilities in the Panama Canal Zone, the Philippines and even Central America became accepted parts of what the Army and the Marines were asked to do. But there are some sobering lessons in that history about the impact of modern military forces on traditional societies. Basically, a great deal of effort is required, "progress" must be carefully defined in terms of the local culture, and what progress there is seems extraordinarily slow by the standards of our own pluralistic democratic culture.

All the more reason then to be careful of the first sin of over-commitment. What is seen by us as a peacekeeping mission is inevitably perceived as an intervention by the inhabitants of the country where we are deploying. Because global politics are local too, caution is required. And yet, according to the Congressional Research Service, on no fewer than 53 occasions between 1993-1999, American forces were sent to countries where they were in imminent danger of hostilities under the reporting provisions of the War Powers Act. Most of these situations were the stuff of headlines: Iraq, Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia. But there were also lesser-known deployments to Macedonia, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Cambodia, among a host of others.

By any standards, this is a record of promiscuous intervention, underlining the truism about good intentions paving the roads to hell. Instead we hear a good deal about "exit strategies." I have always wondered if General George S. Patton might not have observed that the whole point of warfare is to cause the <u>other</u> guy to have an exit strategy! But perhaps the serious point here is that it you have to worry so much about an exit strategy, then maybe it's time to re-think the entrance strategy. Especially in the cases of Iraq, Bosnia and Yugoslavia/Kosovo, we also seem to have accepted the pernicious idea that endless troop commitments are preferable to decisive military or political outcomes. The corollary is of course that the less decisive the outcome, the longer the troops can expect to stay.

One of the points that I raised in my book on Somalia addresses the second sin of doing too much. That wisest of all philosophers, Anonymous, put it this way: The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has limits. In attempting to have our forces engaged in nation-building in Somalia, we clearly had forgotten those limits. As we saw there as well, committing the peacekeeping force to the forcible disarmament of a civilian populace is committing them to combat. We learned that lesson in Bosnia and merely monitored the cantonment of arms and ammunition caches held by the former warring factions. But I note with some trepidation that our forces in Kosovo are now performing police functions while conducting weapons searches and seizures as that mission creeps ever closer to outright hostilities.

In some ways, the very professionalism of our military tends to bring on such expansions of their missions. I saw Army brigade commanders in Bosnia routinely performing prodigies of civil-military relations – outperforming their counterparts from the diplomatic and humanitarian communities because of superior training, organization, equipment and motivation. That situation reflects a basic flaw of the international system. As I also pointed out in my book on Somalia, "If it looks like war, it doesn't look like the U.N." Clearly the U.N. should attend more to mandates and less to the direct management of peacekeeping operations. But we also need a better organizational infrastructure and international capability for managing regional security problems, especially peacekeeping.

My final point is that we have conducted our peacekeeping operations in ways that are rapidly producing a crisis of readiness as well as leadership. Many experts have traced the first problem to the reported 300% rise in Army deployments since the Cold War - even as its strength levels have been cut by over thirty percent. My purpose today is not to argue those figures but instead to personalize them. Virtually every day of my service in Bosnia I saw evidence of soldiers who had been over-deployed to the areas in harm's way mentioned earlier. Many had endured what they referred to as the "the grand slam:" Somalia, Haiti and now Bosnia. Indeed, I met a number of soldiers who had been sent to Germany on "get well tours," where they could once again be on a first-name
basis with their families. Deployed across the Sava River on New Year's Day, 1995, most had not seen those families in six months.

Many of you will have watched in some horror as the readiness rates of Army divisions and their counterparts in other services decay to reflect the inevitable result of our soldiers "voting with their feet" as they are forced to choose between their military careers and their families. And yet I will confess that what keeps me up at night is not the issue of readiness but leadership. This pattern of over-deployments has been accompanied by an even more perverse aberration in the way we conduct our operations. Three closely linked culprits are at the heart of this new leadership issue: "zero casualties," "zero defects" and micro-management.

The first, "zero casualties," is based on a misreading of what went wrong in Somalia. There the issue was not so much the tragic deaths of our soldiers but rather the failure to explain adequately to the American people why they were there and why that deployment represented a critical American interest. It is but a short step to the second, "zero defects," in which a force that is being rapidly reduced produces ever narrower career paths in an already Darwinian process of career advancement and promotion. The result inevitably is micro-management, in which too much rank chases too few responsibilities and no detail is too small to be scrutinized by ever higher headquarters.

More worrying is how these things work in practice. In Bosnia, the zero casualties requirement resulted in "force protection" guidelines that were out of all proportion to any notion of threat – to the point that our coalition partners routinely if covertly snickered at the sight of our

soldiers going everywhere dressed in full "battle rattle." The zero defects and micro-management tendencies produced nightly "battle update briefings, with scores of Powerpoint charts eagerly monitored by the covey of generals who were always in attendance or kibitzing from higher headquarters. Since the Bosnia mission has largely been successful (if endless), it might be argued that these practices do no harm.

But in Kosovo, the zero casualties edict led to a disturbing new style of warfare that ruled out the all-important synergy of land, sea and air combat. Worse yet, we were able to hit targets but not always to see what they were. Civilians and refugees on the ground bore the brunt of this policy with the inevitable accidents attending war by operator-safe standoff munitions. For all the easy talk of "transformation," the Army must come to grips with its own bureaucratic failures in the tardy deployment of Task Force Hawk into Albania. There is much to do to make these things right and that careful process of introspection and analysis has barely begun. My suggestion is therefore that the Congress ask some tough questions of our military about this leadership crisis before signing the checks for the new generation of information-based weaponry that is being urged upon you.

These are just a few of the disturbing long-term consequences resulting from the experiences of peacekeeping over the last several years. In closing, I would suggest that we remember that military forces, either in combat or peacekeeping, primarily buy time, with the price paid always in national treasure and sometimes in blood. As we look to the future, we must insure that we use this time and those sacrifices only for the most critical interests of our nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I look forward to your questions.

Dr. Kenneth Allard is a former US Army Colonel, and the vice president of STRATFOR Inc., an Internet-based, business-intelligence company. He also serves as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University and a Senior Associate at the Center for Strategic & International Studies. Dr. Allard is best known as a frequent television and radio commentator on foreign policy and security issues, especially as a military analyst with NBC News and MSNBC. His numerous publications include two books, Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned, and Command, Control and the Common Defense, winner of the 1991 National Security Book Award. His 26-year military career included service as an intelligence officer in Germany during the Cold War, as a member of the West Point faculty, and as Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff, United States Army. After serving as Dean of Students at the National War College, Colonel Allard volunteered for special assignment in 1996 with US Forces in Bosnia. His alma mater, Lycoming College, recently recognized his public service career with its1999 Outstanding Achievement Award.